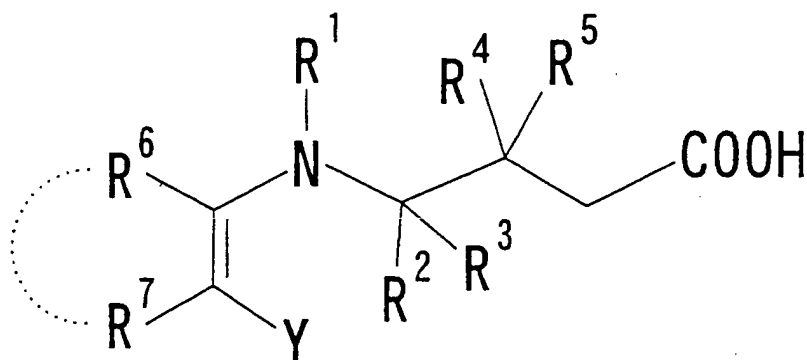


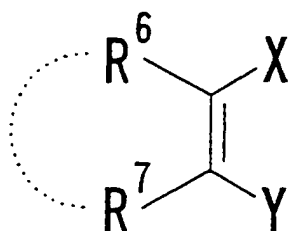
In the Claims

Please substitute the following claims 8 and 12 for the claims 8 and 12 now pending in the above-identified application.

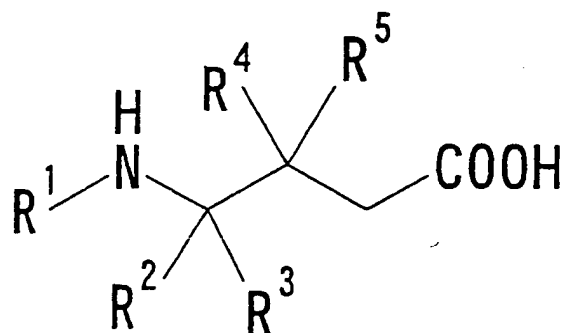
1. (Withdrawn) A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula:



wherein each variable is as defined below, or a salt thereof, characterized in that a compound of the formula:



wherein X is a halogen atom; Y is an electron-withdrawing group; R⁶ and R⁷ are independently a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an optionally substituted amino group, an optionally substituted hydroxyl group, an optionally substituted thiol group, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group; or R⁶ and R⁷ may form a ring, or a salt thereof, is allowed to react with a compound of the formula:



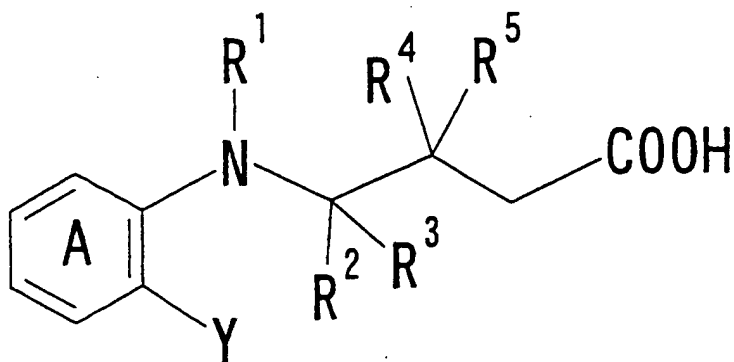
wherein R^1 is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, an optionally substituted acyl group, or an optionally substituted sulfonyl group; R^2 , R^3 , R^4 , and R^5 are independently a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an optionally substituted amino group, an optionally substituted hydroxyl group, an optionally substituted thiol group, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group; or R^1 and R^2 , R^1 and R^4 , R^2 and R^3 , R^4 and R^5 , or R^2 and R^4 may form a ring, or a salt thereof.

2. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 1, wherein Y is an optionally substituted acyl group.

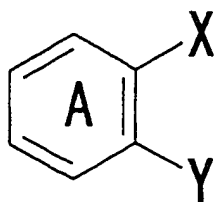
3. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 1, wherein R^2 , R^3 , R^4 , and R^5 are hydrogen atoms.

4. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 1, wherein R^1 is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group.

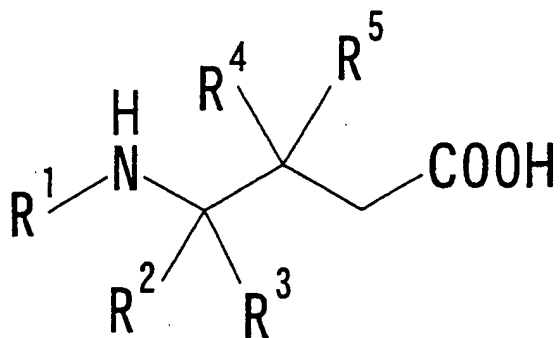
5. (Withdrawn) A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula:



wherein each variable is as defined below, or a salt thereof, characterized in that a compound of the formula:

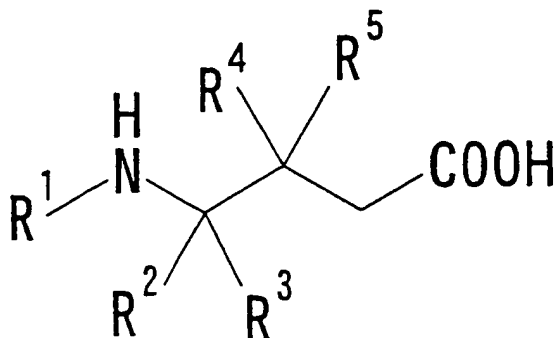


wherein X is a halogen atom; Y is an electron-withdrawing group; and ring A is an optionally substituted benzene ring, or a salt thereof, is allowed to react with a compound of the formula:

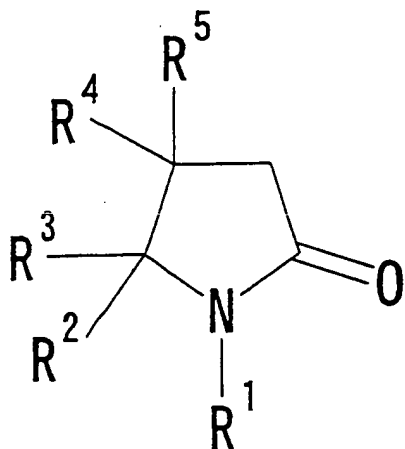


wherein R¹ is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, an optionally substituted acyl group, or an optionally substituted sulfonyl group; R², R³, R⁴, and R⁵ are independently a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an optionally substituted amino group, an optionally substituted hydroxyl group, an optionally substituted thiol group, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group; or R¹ and R², R¹ and R⁴, R² and R³, R⁴ and R⁵, or R² and R⁴ may form a ring, or a salt thereof.

6. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 1, characterized in that a compound of the formula:

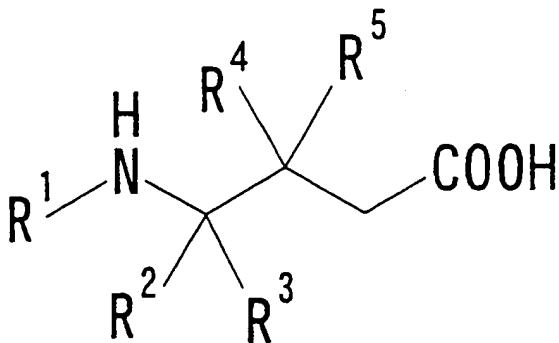


wherein each variable is as defined in claim 1, or a salt thereof, is used, which is obtained by hydrolyzing a compound of the formula:

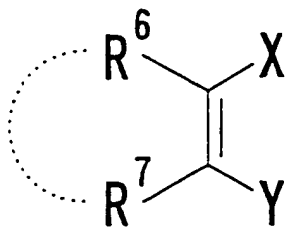


wherein each variable is as defined in claim 1, or a salt thereof.

7. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 6, characterized in that the compound of the formula:

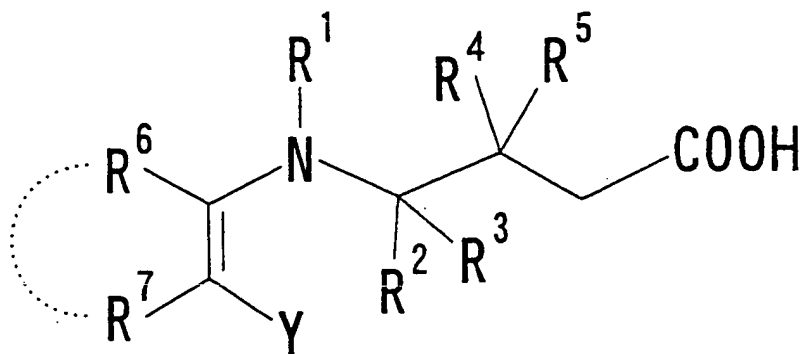


wherein each variable is as defined in claim 1, or a salt thereof, is subjected, without being isolated, to the reaction with the compound of the formula:



wherein each variable is as defined in claim 1, or a salt thereof.

8. (Currently Amended) A compound of the formula:



wherein Y is ~~an optionally substituted acyl group~~ -(CO)R²⁰,

wherein R²⁰ is a hydrogen, or C₁₋₁₀ alkyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkenyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkenyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkynyl, C₆₋₁₄ aryl or phenyl-C₁₋₄ alkyl, which may be substituted with 1 to 3 substituents selected from the group consisting of

(1) halogen, (2) nitro, (3) cyano, (4) hydroxyl group, (5) thiol, (6) C₁₋₄ alkylthio, (7) amino, (8) mono-C₁₋₄ alkylamino, (9) di-C₁₋₄ alkylamino, (10) 5- to 6-membered cyclic amino, (11) carboxyl, (12) C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (13) carbamoyl, (14) mono-C₁₋₄ alkyl-carbamoyl, (15) di-C₁₋₄ alkylcarbamoyl, (16) C₁₋₄ alkyl optionally substituted with a halogen atom or C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (17) C₁₋₄ alkoxy optionally substituted with a halogen atom or C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (18) formyl, (19) C₂₋₄ alkanoyl, (20) C₁₋₄ alkylsulfonyl and (21) C₁₋₄ alkylsulfinyl;

R¹ is

an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group selected from the group consisting of C₁₋₁₀ alkyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkenyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkenyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkynyl, C₆₋₁₄ aryl and phenyl-C₁₋₄ alkyl group,

an optionally substituted acyl group, or

an optionally substituted sulfonyl group;

R², R³, R⁴, R⁵, R⁶, and R⁷ are independently

a hydrogen atom,

a halogen atom,

an optionally substituted amino group wherein said amino group is optionally

substituted with one or two substituents selected from the group consisting of
C₁₋₁₀ alkyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkenyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkenyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkynyl, C₆₋₁₄
aryl and phenyl-C₁₋₄ alkyl, which may be substituted with 1 to 3 substituents
selected from the group consisting of (1) halogen, (2) nitro, (3) cyano, (4)
hydroxyl group, (5) thiol, (6) C₁₋₄ alkylthio, (7) amino, (8) mono-C₁₋₄
alkylamino, (9) di-C₁₋₄ alkylamino, (10) 5- to 6-membered cyclic amino, (11)
carboxyl, (12) C₁₋₄ alkoxy carbonyl, (13) carbamoyl, (14) mono-C₁₋₄
alkylcarbamoyl, (15) di-C₁₋₄ alkyl carbamoyl, (16) C₁₋₄ alkyl optionally
substituted with a halogen atom or C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (17) C₁₋₄ alkoxy optionally
substituted with a halogen atom or C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (18) formyl, (19) C₂₋₄ alkanoyl,
(20) C₁₋₄ alkylsulfonyl and (21) C₁₋₄ alkylsulfinyl; or 5- to 7- membered cyclic
amino,

an optionally substituted hydroxyl group,

an optionally substituted thiol group,

an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group selected from the group consisting of C₁₋₁₀

alkyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkenyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkenyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkynyl, C₆₋₁₄ aryl
or phenyl-C₁₋₄ alkyl group, or

an optionally substituted 5- to 7-membered aromatic heterocyclic group or a saturated

or unsaturated non-aromatic heterocyclic ring, containing at least one to three
kinds of heteroatoms selected from the group consisting of an oxygen atom, a
sulfur atom and a nitrogen atom;

or R¹ and R², R¹ and R⁴, R² and R³, R⁴ and R⁵, R² and R⁴, or R⁶ and R⁷ may form a ring,

wherein said optionally substituted hydrocarbon group and said optionally

substituted heterocyclic group may each independently be substituted with 1 to 3 substituents selected from the group consisting of (1) halogen, (2) nitro, (3) cyano, (4) hydroxyl group, (5) thiol, (6) C₁₋₄ alkylthio, (7) amino, (8) mono-C₁₋₄ alkylamino, (9) di-C₁₋₄ alkylamino, (10) 5- to 6-membered cyclic amino, (11) carboxyl, (12) C₁₋₄ alkoxy carbonyl, (13) carbamoyl, (14) mono-C₁₋₄ alkyl carbamoyl, (15) di-C₁₋₄ alkyl carbamoyl, (16) C₁₋₄ alkyl optionally substituted with a halogen atom or C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (17) C₁₋₄ alkoxy optionally substituted with a halogen atom or C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (18) formyl, (19) C₂₋₄ alkanoyl, (20) C₁₋₄ alkylsulfonyl and (21) C₁₋₄ alkylsulfinyl groups;

and wherein said optionally substituted acyl group, said optionally substituted

sulfonyl group, said optionally substituted thiol group and said optionally substituted hydroxyl group may each independently be substituted with a C₁₋₁₀ alkyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkenyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkenyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkynyl, C₆₋₁₄ aryl or phenyl-C₁₋₄ alkyl, which may be substituted with 1 to 3 substituents selected from the group consisting of (1) halogen, (2) nitro, (3) cyano, (4) hydroxyl group, (5) thiol, (6) C₁₋₄ alkylthio, (7) amino, (8) mono-C₁₋₄ alkylamino, (9) di-C₁₋₄ alkylamino, (10) 5- to 6- membered cyclic amino, (11) carboxyl, (12) C₁₋₄ alkoxy carbonyl, (13) carbamoyl, (14) mono- C₁₋₄ alkyl carbamoyl, (15) di-C₁₋₄ alkyl carbamoyl, (16) C₁₋₄ alkyl optionally substituted with a halogen atom or C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (17) C₁₋₄ alkoxy optionally substituted with a halogen atom or C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (18) formyl, (19) C₂₋₄ alkanoyl, (20) C₁₋₄ alkylsulfonyl and (21) C₁₋₄ alkylsulfinyl,

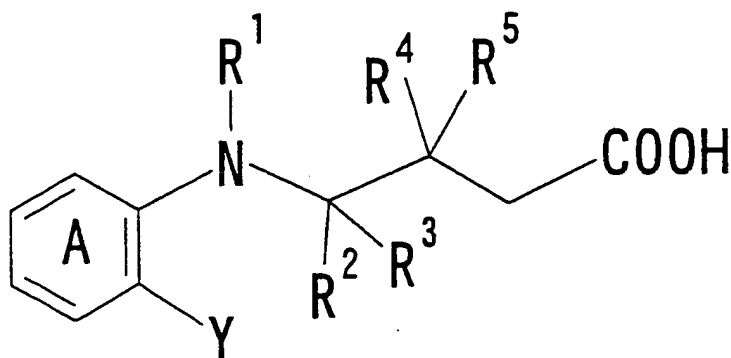
or a salt thereof.

Claim 9 (Cancelled)

10. (Original) The compound according to claim 8, wherein R^2 , R^3 , R^4 , and R^5 are hydrogen atoms.

11. (Original) The compound according to claim 8, wherein R^1 is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group.

12. (Currently Amended) A compound of the formula:



wherein Y is ~~an optionally substituted acyl group~~ $-(CO)R^{20}$,

wherein R^{20} is a hydrogen, or C_{1-10} alkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl, C_{2-10} alkenyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkenyl, C_{2-10} alkynyl, C_{6-14} aryl or phenyl- C_{1-4} alkyl, which may be substituted with 1 to 3 substituents selected from the group consisting of

(1) halogen, (2) nitro, (3) cyano, (4) hydroxyl group, (5) thiol, (6) C_{1-4}

alkylthio, (7) amino, (8) mono- C_{1-4} alkylamino, (9) di- C_{1-4} alkylamino, (10) 5-

to 6-membered cyclic amino, (11) carboxyl, (12) C₁₋₄ alkoxycarbonyl, (13) carbamoyl, (14) mono-C₁₋₄ alkyl-carbamoyl, (15) di-C₁₋₄ alkylcarbamoyl, (16) C₁₋₄ alkyl optionally substituted with a halogen atom or C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (17) C₁₋₄ alkoxy optionally substituted with a halogen atom or C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (18) formyl, (19) C₂₋₄ alkanoyl, (20) C₁₋₄ alkylsulfonyl and (21) C₁₋₄ alkylsulfinyl;

ring A is an optionally substituted benzene ring;

R¹ is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group selected from the group consisting of C₁₋₁₀ alkyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkenyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkenyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkynyl, C₆₋₁₄ aryl and phenyl-C₁₋₄ alkyl group,

an optionally substituted acyl group,

or an optionally substituted sulfonyl group;

R², R³, R⁴, and R⁵ are independently

a hydrogen atom,

a halogen atom,

an optionally substituted amino group wherein said amino group is optionally

substituted with one or two substituents selected from the group consisting of C₁₋₁₀ alkyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkenyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkenyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkynyl, C₆₋₁₄ aryl and phenyl-C₁₋₄ alkyl, which may be substituted with 1 to 3 substituents selected from the group consisting of (1) halogen, (2) nitro, (3) cyano, (4) hydroxyl group, (5) thiol, (6) C₁₋₄ alkylthio, (7) amino, (8) mono-C₁₋₄ alkylamino, (9) di-C₁₋₄ alkylamino, (10) 5- to 6-membered cyclic amino, (11) carboxyl, (12) C₁₋₄ alkoxycarbonyl, (13) carbamoyl, (14) mono-C₁₋₄ alkylcarbamoyl, (15) di-C₁₋₄ alkyl carbamoyl, (16) C₁₋₄ alkyl optionally substituted with a halogen atom or C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (17) C₁₋₄ alkoxy optionally

substituted with a halogen atom or C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (18) formyl, (19) C₂₋₄ alkanoyl, (20) C₁₋₄ alkylsulfonyl and (21) C₁₋₄ alkylsulfinyl; or 5- to 7- membered cyclic amino,

an optionally substituted hydroxyl group,

an optionally substituted thiol group,

an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group selected from the group consisting of C₁₋₁₀ alkyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkenyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkenyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkynyl, C₆₋₁₄ aryl or phenyl-C₁₋₄ alkyl group,

or an optionally substituted 5- to 7-membered aromatic heterocyclic group or a saturated or unsaturated non-aromatic heterocyclic ring, containing at least one to three kinds of heteroatoms selected from the group consisting of an oxygen atom, a sulfur atom and a nitrogen atom;

or R¹ and R², R¹ and R⁴, R² and R³, R⁴ and R⁵, or R² and R⁴ may form a ring,

wherein said optionally substituted hydrocarbon group and said optionally substituted heterocyclic group may each independently be substituted with 1 to 3 substituents selected from the group consisting of (1) halogen, (2) nitro, (3) cyano, (4) hydroxyl group, (5) thiol, (6) C₁₋₄ alkylthio, (7) amino, (8) mono-C₁₋₄ alkylamino, (9) di-C₁₋₄ alkylamino, (10) 5- to 6-membered cyclic amino, (11) carboxyl, (12) C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (13) carbamoyl, (14) mono-C₁₋₄ alkyl-carbamoyl, (15) di-C₁₋₄ alkylcarbamoyl, (16) C₁₋₄ alkyl optionally substituted with a halogen atom or C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (17) C₁₋₄ alkoxy optionally substituted with a halogen atom or C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (18) formyl, (19) C₂₋₄ alkanoyl, (20) C₁₋₄ alkylsulfonyl and (21) C₁₋₄ alkylsulfinyl groups;

and wherein said optionally substituted acyl group, said optionally substituted sulfonyl group, said optionally substituted thiol group and said optionally substituted hydroxyl group may each independently be substituted with a C₁₋₁₀ alkyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkenyl, C₃₋₇ cycloalkenyl, C₂₋₁₀ alkynyl, C₆₋₁₄ aryl or phenyl-C₁₋₄ alkyl, which may be substituted with 1 to 3 substituents selected from the group consisting of (1) halogen, (2) nitro, (3) cyano, (4) hydroxyl group, (5) thiol, (6) C₁₋₄ alkylthio, (7) amino, (8) mono-C₁₋₄ alkylamino, (9) di-C₁₋₄ alkylamino, (10) 5- to 6-membered cyclic amino, (11) carboxyl, (12) C₁₋₄ alkoxy carbonyl, (13) carbamoyl, (14) mono-C₁₋₄ alkyl carbamoyl, (15) di-C₁₋₄ alkyl carbamoyl, (16) C₁₋₄ alkyl optionally substituted with a halogen atom or C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (17) C₁₋₄ alkoxy optionally substituted with a halogen atom or C₁₋₄ alkoxy, (18) formyl, (19) C₂₋₄ alkanoyl, (20) C₁₋₄ alkylsulfonyl and (21) C₁₋₄ alkylsulfinyl,

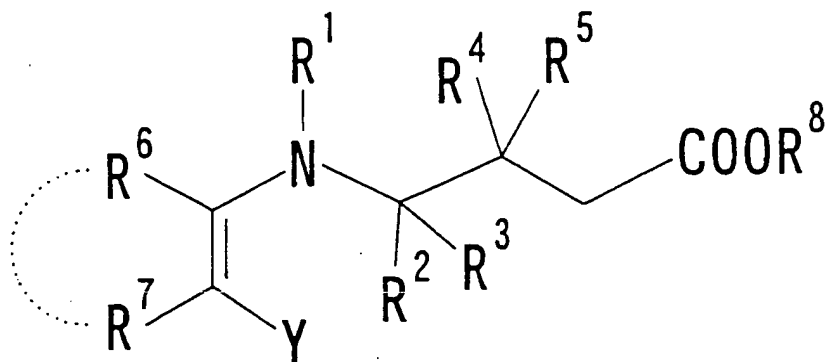
or a salt thereof.

Claim 13 (Cancelled)

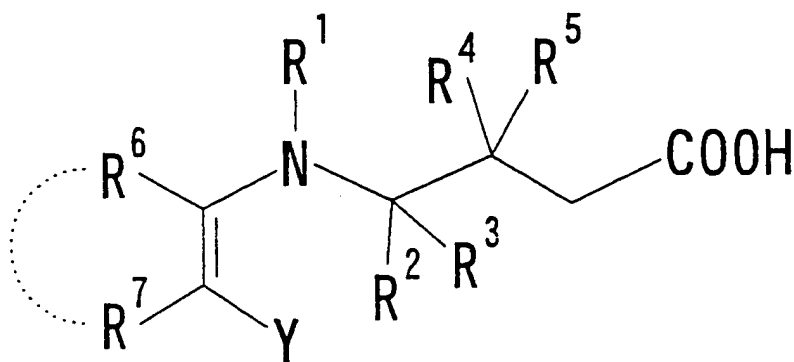
14. (Original) The compound according to claim 12, wherein R², R³, R⁴, and R⁵ are hydrogen atoms.

15. (Original) The compound according to claim 12, wherein R¹ is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group.

16. (Withdrawn) A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula:



wherein R^8 is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group and the other variables are as defined below, or a salt thereof, characterized in that a compound of the formula:



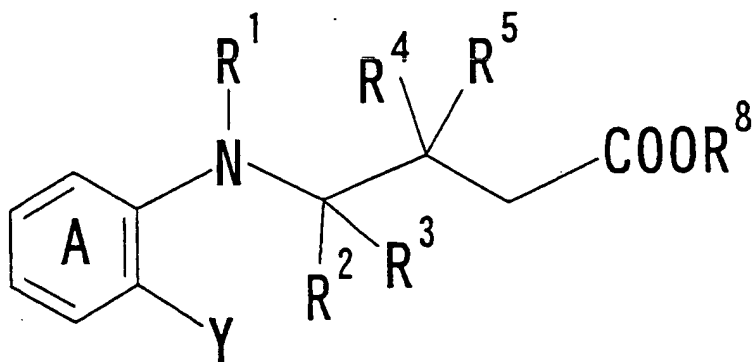
wherein each variable is as defined in claim 1, or a salt thereof, which is obtained by the preparation process according to claim 1, is subjected to esterification.

17. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 16, wherein Y is an optionally substituted acyl group.

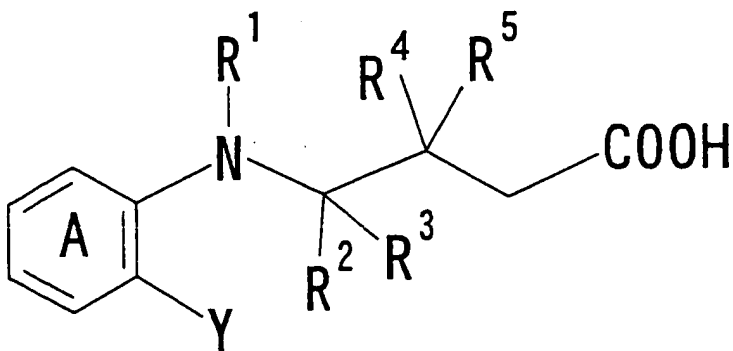
18. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 16, wherein R^2 , R^3 , R^4 , and R^5 are hydrogen atoms.

19. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 16, wherein R^1 is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group.

20. (Withdrawn) A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula:

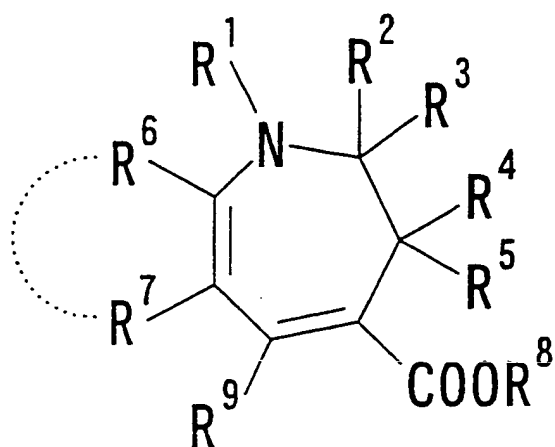


wherein R^8 is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group and the other variables are as defined below, or a salt thereof, characterized in that a compound of the formula:

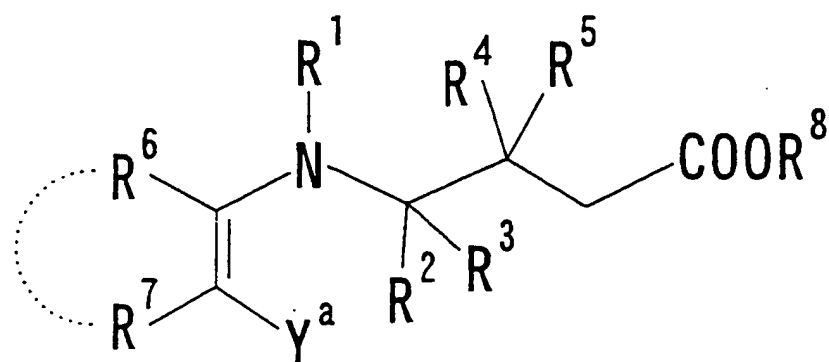


wherein each variable is as defined in claim 5, or a salt thereof, which is obtained by the preparation process according to claim 5, is subjected to esterification.

21. (Withdrawn) A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula:



wherein R⁹ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, and the other variables are as defined below, or a salt thereof, characterized in that a compound of the formula:



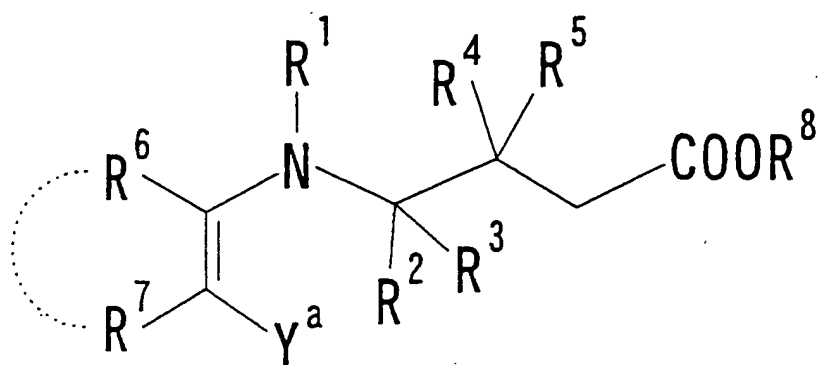
wherein Y^a is a group of formula -COR⁹ wherein R⁹ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, and the other variables are as defined in claim 16, or a salt thereof, which is obtained by the preparation process according to claim 16, is subjected to ring-closing reaction.

22. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 21, wherein R⁹ is a hydrogen atom.

23. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 21, wherein R², R³, R⁴, and R⁵ are hydrogen atoms.

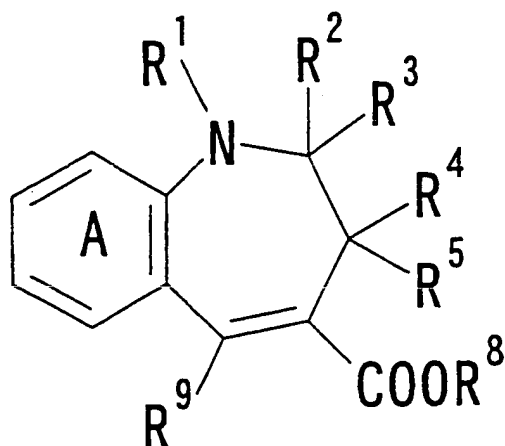
24. (Withdrawn) The process according to claim 21, wherein R^1 is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group.

25. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 21, characterized in that a compound of the formula:

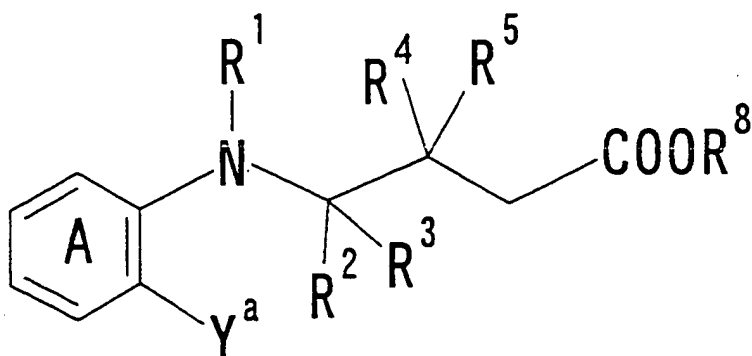


wherein Y^a is a group of formula $-COR^9$ wherein R^9 is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, and the other variables are as defined in claim 16, or a salt thereof, which is obtained by the preparation process according to claim 16, is subjected, without being isolated, to ring-closing reaction.

26. (Withdrawn) A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula:



wherein R⁹ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, and the other variables are as defined below, or a salt thereof, characterized in that a compound of the formula:



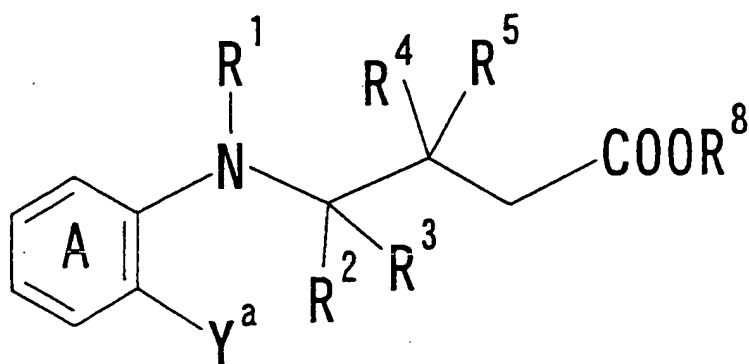
wherein Yᵃ is a group of formula -COR⁹ wherein R⁹ is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, and the other variables are as defined in claim 20, or a salt thereof, which is obtained by the preparation process according to claim 20, is subjected to ring-closing reaction.

27. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 26, wherein R⁹ is a hydrogen atom.

28. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 26, wherein R^2 , R^3 , R^4 , and R^5 are hydrogen atoms.

29. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 26, wherein R^1 is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group.

30. (Withdrawn) The preparation process according to claim 26, characterized in that a compound of the formula:



wherein Y^a is a group of formula $-COR^9$ wherein R^9 is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, and the other variables are as defined in claim 20, or a salt thereof, which is obtained by the preparation process according to claim 20, is subjected, without being isolated, to ring-closing reaction.